

Dear Councillors,

I have been involved in the arts in Guelph since the late '90s as a parent, a performer, a student, a volunteer and a board member of a couple of organizations. Throughout that time I have repeatedly experienced how difficult it is to find reasonably priced rehearsal, performance, or studio space for creative people in Guelph. I have also observed how important the arts are for connecting people of all ages to each other and to their community. As you know these connections are vital for mental health. I also have noticed that for youth who do not feel welcome or able to compete on sports teams, the arts provide a similar experience of working with others toward a goal and persevering through challenges and failures.

For these reasons, I support the repurposing of the Drill Hall as an arts and culture hub.

A couple of inspiring precedents:

In Hamilton, a former public works carpentry shop has been transformed into "The Bridgeworks" live music and performance venue

<https://bridgeworks.ca/>

In Toronto, a former garbage incineration building is slated to become a culture and community hub.

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/toronto-plans-to-turn-glorious-garbage-incinerator-heritage-site-into-downtown-community-hub-1.6216527?cmp=rss>

Thank you for your time,
Jane Litchfield